Candy: The Big Beautiful Golden Retriever

by

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CANDY:
THE BIG BEAUTIFUL
GOLDEN RETRIEVER

For all of my Grandchildren
(especially when they were younger)

Photographs by Elizabeth Fraser

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Foreword

Candy was a real dog, a Golden Retriever, that most beautiful of dogs as many would agree. And while these stories are fictional, they are what I believe would be her stories, told in her own words, had she but the capacity to tell them. Unfortunately her actual comprehension vocabulary was limited to about 25 words, like Sit! Stand! Lie down! Good dog! and so on. Otherwise anything else that was said to her, no matter how significant to the speaker, was just a mumble. But I like to think that somewhere in the back of that fuzzy mind other more meaningful thoughts might have rambled. And maybe, who knows, the stories here are what might have occupied her as she sat looking into the fire. It is good to think of her living as the joy of a nuclear family in a big old stone farmhouse, with the family known to her only by the names Dave Honey, Honey Babe, Jeff, and Baby Jane, along with Cat her friend and enemy.

Candy: The Big Beautiful Golden Retriever

CHAPTER 1

HOW CANDY HOWLED AT THE MOON AND HOW SHE GOT HER NAME

A little while ago I was outside looking for Cat. I'm always looking for Cat. But this time a very strange thing happened. It was a beautiful clear night, very beautiful, very clear. I was sniffing the air because I knew Cat was near. I looked up, still sniffing, and that big bright shiny thing was up in the sky, round and bright and shiny. I sniffed at it but all I could smell was Cat.

And then a funny feeling came over me as I looked at it. It seemed that there was only me and the shiny thing in the whole world. I felt very lonely. Then I heard a little whimper, and the whimper grew louder until it turned into a howl, and then I realized it was me that was howling, a long, mournful, wailing howl. It was at that point that I said to myself—well, I didn't actually say it because I can't speak. I can only think Fuzzy

kinds of thoughts. Anyway it was at that point, while I was still howling, that I said to myself in my own way:

"I think I'm a Dog. I really think I'm a Dog. I'm not People. I'm a Dog and I'm howling at the bright shiny thing!"

It felt good to say it at last, because I hadn't been too sure. I could see these long golden paws out in front of me with their trailing manes of hair, and I could see that golden-haired body behind me with the thick bushy tail, but I hadn't been really sure. It can be very confusing when you can only think Fuzzy Thoughts. Honey Babe would say to me:

"How's my good girl today? Are you a good dog, then?"

Now that's confusing. Actually what I really heard her say was:

"Mumble mumble mumble, good girl, mumble? Mumble mumble dog." But I knew what she meant. And Dave Honey would say:

"Who's a good girl then?" And other people would say:

"Oh, she's beautiful!"

But they also said that to Baby Janey. So I never quite knew—until I howled at the bright shiny thing. And then I knew. I knew inside somehow. I'm a Dog and it's good to be a Dog.

So I forgot about Cat, and I sat and howled and howled, feeling more and more miserable the more I howled, but at the same time kind of happy since I knew I was a dog, until finally Dave Honey came to the door.

"Mumble mumble noise, Candy!" he said. "Come inside mumble mumble cookie!"

I didn't hear him at first. I never do when I am doing something important. And anyway the howling was making such a noise that I could hardly hear anything. So he came out and stood beside me with his hand on my neck. It felt good. I wasn't alone anymore.

"OK girl", he said. "Mumble mumble good dog. Come inside mumble."

I turned and put my head against his leg. He stroked me under the chin the way I like it, and then that funny thing happened with my tail

the way it does when I feel good or when somebody says nice things, or even sometimes when I see Cat. It sort of moves, just a little twitch, right at the end at first. I don't do it. It does it by itself. And then the twitch gets bigger and my tail starts to move sideways and then up and down and round and round until my whole tail is going and going and going. It feels wonderful, and it seems to make other people feel wonderful. Sometimes when I'm lying down it goes thump, thump, thump on the floor, and that feels good too. So we go inside and Dave Honey says:

"Sit, Candy!" and he gives me a cookie—one of the big ones that are almost like bones.

We live in this house. It's like a kennel but all soft. I live with People. There are two Big People and two Little People. Honey Babe is a big person. She is soft and warm and has a soothing voice and gives me Dinner. Dave Honey is big and hard with a strong voice but he is also warm and takes me for Walkies. But even their names are confusing. Honey Babe is sometimes just called Honey, but then so is Dave Honey. But sometimes Honey Babe is called Mom, and Dave Honey is

called Dad, although usually these names are used only when they are talking with the Little People.

There are two Little People. One is Janey Baby, or sometimes, just Baby. Janey Baby is very small. She couldn't walk at first, but she could crawl fast around the floor like a dog. She likes my tail and I flick it for her. But really I'm afraid of her. Not that she would hurt me, but I might hurt her. You see you can't touch babies. They're like puppies. You can't touch puppies unless you're their mother, in case you might hurt them. So whenever I can, I walk in a big circle around them, and move away when they come near.

Sometimes, however, when I'm being very careful, I let Janey come near and crawl over me. It feels good and my tail wags and she giggles and tries to catch it. The other Little Person is Jeff. Jeff is a boy. He's a big boy and goes to School. I don't know what School is but I like to meet Jeff when he comes back. He calls me and I run and run and then we play and he rubs my tummy. My tail wags and everything is good.

Dave Honey goes to a place called Work, and Honey Babe goes Upstairs. I've never been to Work. I don't think it's fun, though, because Dave Honey doesn't want to play when he gets home until he's had a Rest. I think he's thirsty also when he gets home. He and Honey Babe sit in chairs and just talk and don't pay any attention to me at all. Sometimes I even go behind the big chair and sulk until they finish.

Honey Babe doesn't go Upstairs all the time; generally only when Janey is asleep. Sometimes when she is Upstairs Janey wakes up and cries. I run in and bark a little and I sniffle with my nose through the bars of the cage and my tail wags. Honey Babe comes in and lifts Janey up and she stops crying. Honey Babe thinks that she stops Janey crying, I think, but I know better.

I sometimes go Upstairs with Honey Babe. I lie beside her very quietly because she doesn't like to be disturbed when she is Upstairs. She sits down at a kind of table with box-like things on it and goes clickety-click with her fingers on one of the box-things. Funny signs appear on the glass box-thing in front of her and she looks at them very carefully as though they were important. I

don't know what she is doing but she likes it and that's good. Sometimes she bends down and strokes me. I go thump.

When Dave Honey is not thirsty anymore, he suddenly says:

"Where's my dog, then? Mumble, mumble Walkies? Walkies? Candy mumble mumble Walkies?"

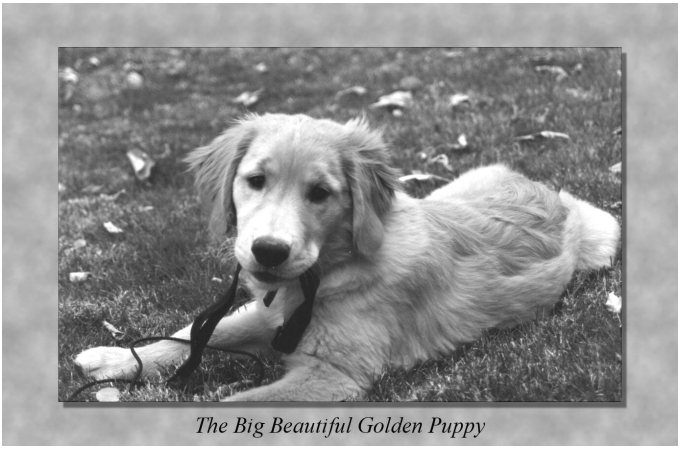
Oh, I do love Walkies! I don't really know why, because I can go outside and go for my own Walkies. Outside the back of our kennel are the Dark Woods where there are lots of places to go and lots of things to do. I could go for my own Walkies there every day if I wanted to. But somehow that's different. Going Walkies is different from going walking. So when Dave Honey says, "Let's go Walkies!" I jump up and dance and go and get my leash and carry it in my mouth until he opens the door and we go outside.

He says "Heel!" and I go and sit beside him, looking up at him. I don't know why I do that. I think that one time, a long time ago, he showed me that when he says "Heel!" I should sit or walk sedately beside him with my head up and my tail

out. I know I look very beautiful when I do that. People we pass stop and say:

"What a beautiful dog!"

So I know I'm beautiful. In fact I think I am a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever. That's what I hear when Honey Babe is talking about me. I certainly know I am golden colored, and if a retriever fetches sticks and balls and things I know I love to fetch sticks and balls and things. So I really think, without being fuzzy, that I'm a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever, and I think I am called Candy, because whenever people speak to me they say "Candy" so I think that's my name.



The Big Beautiful Golden Puppy

In fact I think my full name is Christmas Candy Floss. I don't really remember how I got that name but I think it was something like this. When I first came to our kennel, and that was a little while before Janey came, I was just a small puppy. I didn't even have a name. It was the cold time, just before that time of the year when everybody gets nice and gives everybody else presents, even me.

They had this funny tree thing in the corner of the room. It didn't really grow there. It sat on a kind of stand, all covered with twinkles and balls and candy and all sorts of things. I used to scamper around the room then chasing Fuzzy Thoughts, round and round, and in and out, and over the stool, and under the tree. But one time I didn't quite get under the tree; I kind of went through it. And when I came out I was all covered with candy canes and silvery floss. So Honey Babe said: "That's what we'll call her, Dave! We'll call her Christmas Candy Floss!" And Christmas Candy Floss I became. But Christmas Candy Floss was too big a name so I just got called Candy. And that's how I got my name—I think!

CHAPTER 2

HOW CANDY AND CAT BECAME FRIENDS

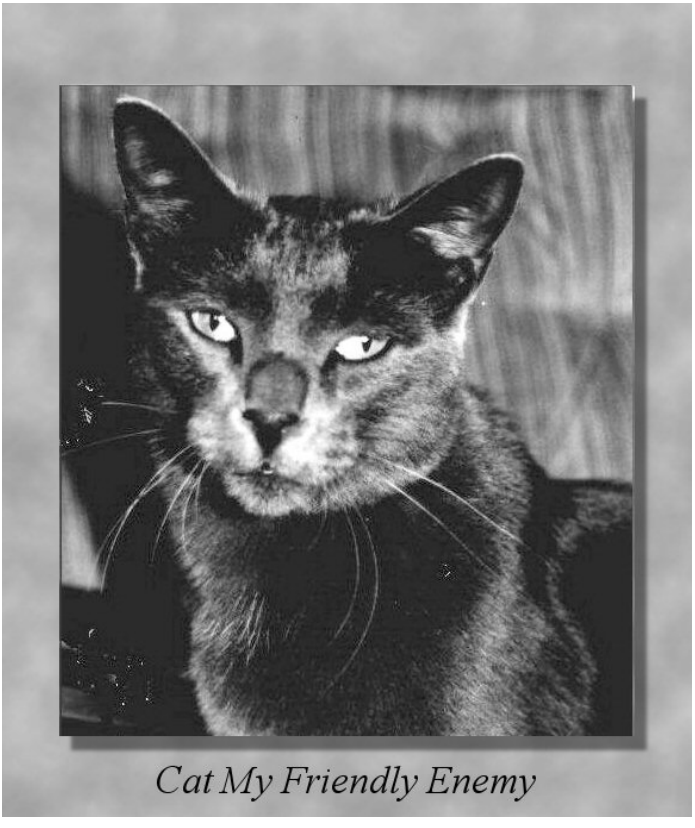
A little while ago I started talking about Cat, and then I remembered about the moon. My thinking jumps around a bit because it's Fuzzy. Honey Babe says that ideas have to go through a lot of ooze to get into my head—or out of it. So let's go back to Cat while I can.

Cat lives next door. Cat is black and sleek with bright eyes that glow in the dark and a long black tail that swishes when she is angry. She sits on my front lawn and licks her paws and then wipes her face with them, looking around all the while. I think she wants to make sure I'm watching. She knows I am in the house; otherwise she wouldn't sit so carelessly on the front lawn. I think she can see me through the window and does it deliberately just to tease me. Cats are like that. So I watch through the window or through the glass door. I quiver and whimper a little bit because I can't chase her. Cats are for chasing.

That's why they are there. But she knows I can't get at her.

Windows are funny things. You can look at things on the other side but you can't get through them. You can't even smell things properly, if at all, unless the window is a little bit open or there's a crack under the door. In some ways they are like mirrors. I remember when I was very small—I don't remember very well things when I was small, but I remember this one—the first time I saw a mirror. I guess I was a puppy. I went up to it and I saw this puppy coming towards me. I stopped and it stopped. I growled and it growled. I took very small steps forward and it took very small steps forward, until there we were, nose to nose. We both sniffed and touched the glass, but there was no other puppy there. I couldn't understand it. I guess I still don't quite understand it.

But I've forgotten about Cat again. I watched her and I quivered and whimpered. Then a bark came. It was quite surprising, that bark. I didn't know it was going to come. I've got lots of barks. They're all different with different meanings. This one meant:



Cat My Friendly Enemy

"Hey you, Cat! Get off my lawn! You wait 'til I come outside and I'll get you!"

However, I don't even know if Cat heard me. I think she did, though, for she turned lazily

toward me, licked a paw, and carried on as though I didn't even exist. Of course this made me mad. Here am I, a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever being casually ignored by Cat. Of all things! This is something you can't put up with so I dashed to the front door barking for Honey Babe.

"Let me out! Let me out!" I barked. "That's Cat out there. She's being very rude and I want to chase her!" But somehow Honey Babe didn't understand.

"Mumble, mumble", she said. "Mumble, mumble, barking." She looked out of the window.

"No, mumble, mumble", she said. "Mumble mumble Cat". I knew it was Cat. Of course it was Cat! Sometimes I wonder how People can be so stupid.

Now, it's not that I don't like Cat. I do like Cat. I don't want to hurt her, but you know how it is. I just want to chase her, and sometimes I do. When I'm outside and I see her on the lawn I immediately start barking and run as fast as I can towards her. She bounds across the lawn and up the tree on the other side and then sits on a branch and just looks at me. Just sits there

looking. It's very frustrating. She knows I can't climb trees. I wish I could climb trees but I can't, so I bark and dance around and around but she pays me no attention—just looks at me without seeing.

So one day I thought a clever Fuzzy Thought. I thought that if I could get past Cat I could get to the tree first, and then when she came to the tree I would be there waiting for her. So this day I came out and Cat was on the lawn. She wasn't looking at me. I crept slowly forward until I was nearly beside her then I jumped right past her and ran for the tree and waited for her. But she didn't come. She just turned round and went the other way. I sat there wondering.

So then I thought another Fuzzy Thought. I thought I'd creep up to her again and just get as close as I could without her noticing. So I crept up very, very slowly, one paw at a time, standing absolutely silent in between, until I was nearly there, and then I jumped—but she wasn't there anymore. She jumped sideways and then suddenly, quick as a flash, she shot out a paw at my nose. It stung. I yelped and ran back to Honey Babe to tell her about this horrible beast but

Honey Babe wasn't there. So I whimpered to myself for a while.

Then I thought still another Fuzzy Thought. A very good Fuzzy Thought. I thought about the mirror and how I had gotten get very close to the other puppy without it running away. So I thought that if I crept up close to her, but not too close, she couldn't sting me with her paw and maybe we could talk a little.

Anyway I thought I would try it. So the next time she was on the lawn I tried again. Oh, I crept so slowly! She could see me. She sat swishing her tail, looking at me with those strange eyes. I got very close, but not too close. I lay down with my paws out in front of me. She put her paws out in front of her. I put my head on my paws. She put her head on her paws. I went forward the tiniest little bit, wriggling with my back legs. She didn't move. My paw touched her paw. She didn't move. I went forward a little more. She didn't move. I put my head forward and sniffed and then I licked her nose. She began to make a funny purring sound and I began to whimper a little. I put out a big paw and rolled her on her side...She curled up and wriggled and

snuggled between my paws. I licked her all over. And that's how Cat and I became friends

CHAPTER 3

HOW CANDY MET SKUNK AND FOILED THE GROUNDHOG

There is this big Hole in the bank in the back yard. The back yard is not flat like the lawn in front that Cat lies on. It slopes down towards the Dark Woods and there is a big bank on one side. I used to roll down the slope when I was a puppy. I don't do that sort of thing now that I'm a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever—except when I forget, and then I lie on my back and kick my legs in the air and sometimes that makes me roll down the bank. Well, perhaps it doesn't make me do it. Perhaps I let it happen, sort of accidental. And then I have to stand up and look around because I'm Fuzzy and don't quite know where I am.

Anyway, there's this big Hole in the bank. There are trees and bushes and things growing there and the Hole is in amongst them, but you can see it when you sit on the deck at the back door and sniff the air and think Fuzzy Thoughts. It's not really a big Hole. I can't even get my head

in. But it=s the most exciting Hole in the Entire World. It has the most wonderful smells. You just know that inside that Hole there must be lots and lots of things to chase. Not like Cat, not nice things. Things like Animals.

There=s a fat furry animal that lives there. It=s about the same size as Cat, if Cat were fat; and it has a very ugly face. It waddles along on little feet and it has a very bad temper. It snarls and rattles its teeth together when it's mad. It does that to make you feel scared. But I'm not afraid of it. I=m a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever and I'm not afraid of any fat little animal.

As well as the fat furry animal there's a lovely black fluffy animal with a white stripe along its back that sometimes comes to visit. It=s very pretty and it looks like it wants to be friends but I'm not sure it really wants to be friends because I remember what happened on the Terrible Day—and how long it lasted afterwards. The fluffy black and white animal came out and sat in the backyard. It looked like it wanted to play. So I barked and I danced, and I ran around it in circles, and I put my head on my paws and barked at it again, but it just sat there looking

very pretty. So I jumped in to nudge it a little. It turned round and raised its tail, and Oh! I got sprayed with the most terrible spray you could imagine. It stung and burned and the smell was so bad that I howled and ran to the back door to tell Honey Babe to let me in. Honey Babe opened the door and she said:

"CANDY!! MUMBLE MUMBLE, SKUNK!! NO, MUMBLE! STAY OUTSIDE!"

She came outside and got the hose, and she had some red stuff in a can that smelled funny. She washed me all over with the red stuff and the hose, but it didn't make any difference. It still stung and I still smelt just as bad. Cat sat on the fence washing her paws. I think she was laughing at me but I felt so bad I couldn't even think of chasing her. Honey Babe washed me with the red stuff for days and days and days, but everywhere I went the smell went with me. I felt so terrible. I even tried to hide in closets and under beds but the smell didn't go away for a long, long time.

But sometimes I feel sad about Skunk. Skunk must have that smell all the time. Nobody can be friends with Skunk, and since it must be

surrounded by that smell it can't smell all the other exciting things to smell.

Not like dogs. Dogs are different. They see with smells. I don't see very clearly with my eyes. Oh, I can see all right, but everything is kind of fuzzy. Maybe that's why I think Fuzzy Thoughts. But I can sit on the deck just gently sniffing and I can see a smell picture of the whole backyard—across the grass, behind the trees, away beyond, and I can tell when something doesn't belong, or when something moves, or when Dave Honey comes into the driveway in his car. In fact I can sit in the house and smell things outside—like Skunk, or even the little fat, furry, animal. But Skunk! Poor Skunk can't smell anything but skunk, and perhaps not even that. I feel sad about Skunk.

Anyway Skunk sometimes lives in the Hole. Not all the time, but sometimes. And when I see Skunk I bark very carefully and stay away. Skunk looks at me and just sways his tail. I think we understand each other.

Usually when I am outside I go and sniff at the Hole every now and then just to remind the Things inside that I'm here and they'd better not

dare to come out because there's a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever outside waiting for them.

But one day, when I was at the Hole I suddenly felt a smell outside and I knew that the fat furry animal had gotten outside without me knowing. I looked around and there it was. I was shocked. Just shocked that it would dare. So I chased it into a corner where it couldn't go any further. It turned, and snarled, and rattled its teeth, and stabbed at me with its paws. So I barked and barked and barked, but Honey Babe didn't come even although she was sitting on the deck. She just said:

"Quiet, now, Candy, mumble mumble. No barking," and didn't even look up.

So I kept on barking and it kept on snarling. And then I thought to myself, and this wasn't a Fuzzy Thought, this was a Very Clear Thought:

"This fat little animal wants to bite me!"

I didn't like that Thought. And then the fat little animal jumped forward and bit me. It actually bit me. Right on the neck. Right where all the fur is, so all it got was a mouthful of fur. And

then it sat there on its hind legs snarling and spitting bits of fur until it jumped at me again.

Now, I'm a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever and of course I don't get scared by fat furry things that snarl and spit. But I thought maybe—just maybe—it was all right to be a little bit careful, not really scared, but just a little bit careful. And maybe it would be a Good Idea to run to Honey Babe on the deck and tell here about the Great Beast that wanted to eat me. In fact, perhaps I wasn't a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever anymore; perhaps I was just a little tiny dog. So I ran to Honey Babe, and I stood behind her, and I yelped:

AThere's a Huge Great Beast out there and it's trying to eat me! Do something!" And she said:

"All right, Candy, mumble mumble. It=s OK. Good dog." So she stood up and got the broom and walked towards the Huge Great Beast. And as I walked behind her I barked angrily at the Beast and said:

"Go away, you Huge Great Beast or Honey Babe'll get you!"

And the Huge Great Beast waddled away stiffly. And then it turned into a small fat furry

animal with an ugly face, and I turned back into a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever. But it kept turning around every now and then snarling as if to say:

"Don't you come near me again or I'll fix you!"

But I didn't mind because I felt big and strong and I had driven this huge Great Beast away. I sort of forgot that Honey Babe might have had something to do with it. Maybe she did, but it's all kind of fuzzy.

So now when I go to the Hole I'm very careful. Not scared, just careful. I make sure that Skunk isn't anywhere near and that the little fat furry animal isn't waddling around. Or was it really a Huge Great Beast?

CHAPTER 4

HOW CANDY WENT FISHING AND OVERCAME THE MONSTER

One day Jeff came out into the backyard. He had a glass jar and a spade and he started digging in the bank near the Hole. I thought he might be looking for the fat furry animal or maybe even Skunk, and I wasn't too happy, but digging is fun, and anyway Jeff was there so I put my front paws down and I started digging beside him. Cat sat watching from a tree. The dirt flew out between my hind legs and splattered all over the place. It was great fun until Jeff said:

"Hey Candy! No! Mumble, mumble. Mumble mumble. Worms!"

And he held up the jar. Now, I didn't know what "Worms" was anyway so I put my nose in the hole and sniffed but I couldn't smell anything. At least not anything very good. And then I saw a wriggly thing coming out of the place where I was digging. It didn't smell good either. You couldn't

In the Dark Woods Looking for Things

eat it. But Jeff jumped at it with excitement and picked it up and put it in the jar and said:

"Good dog, Candy! Worms!"

So now I knew what worms was, and if Jeff was pleased I was pleased, so I wagged my tail and dug some more until we got lots of worms. Then Jeff picked up this long pole thing with the string on the end and said:

"Come on, Candy, mumble, mumble. Let=s go fishing!"

Well I didn't know what fishing was but he set off along the trail that goes to the creek away beyond our backyard and I ran alongside. Cat slunk along through the trees. Now, I know that trail. It winds through the Dark Woods to the creek and then along the creek until the creek joins the river. And I know there are lots of Things in these woods. I haven't exactly seen them, but I know. So I have to make sure that these Things don't get to Jeff.

I run along the trail ahead of him and round the corner, and sometimes a I dash a little way into the woods just to make sure, and then I run back to Jeff to make sure again that he's still there, or perhaps to keep behind him if some Things actually appear, or perhaps even to make sure he doesn't leave me alone in the Dark Woods with all the Things. I don't think I'd like that.

The trail joins another trail where the creek runs into the river. The river is big. It's bigger than the road that runs along outside our kennel. The water goes quietly by for a long way, nearly as long as it takes for Jeff to walk to School, and then it begins to run faster and faster and

splashes against the rocks until it falls over a very steep place where it makes a lot of noise.

Jeff sits down on a rock beside the river. I sit beside him wagging my tail and hoping that something good is going to happen. Cat is swishing through the grass, but watching carefully. Jeff opens the jar and I sniff at it expectantly, hoping it might have turned into something to eat, but Jeff says:

"No, Candy. Not good. Worms!"

So I go to the edge of the bank and bend forward and put one paw into the water. It feels good. Oh, how I love water! I like to get into it and feel it ripple over me, or if it=s shallow I like to roll in it and get covered in mud. Honey Babe doesn't like that. She always yells at me when I get covered in mud. She doesn't know how good it feels. I put the other paw in and then I lick the water a little. It doesn't taste very good but it's all right and so I slither my body in until I'm swimming in it. Not swimming like People do. I really just keep on walking, with my head and my tail out of the water. It's harder than walking but it's nice to feel the water. So I swim around a little

bit and then I climb out on the bank, dripping wet. I run up to Jeff and I shake myself, and the water sprays all over him. He yelps and yells at me. I don't think he likes the water like I do.

Cat doesn't like the water either. Cat never goes swimming, but she goes right to the edge of the bank and lies down and looks very carefully over the edge. I think she's looking for something to eat.

Jeff is sitting watching the string on the end of his pole. The string now stretches away out into the middle of the river. There's a little red bobbing thing at the end of the string and Jeff is watching it carefully. Every now and then it bobs under the water. When it does that Jeff grabs the pole, and winds the string in, all excited. Then he looks at the end where the worm is. But it just looks the same except it's a little bit smaller. So he throws it back in again. I don't know what he's trying to do but I guess he must like it.

Then, suddenly, I see the Monster. The Monster is quite a long way down the river, at least the length of the garden from front to back. It's sitting there in the water, just at the edge where the river comes into the bank to make a big

sandy place where you can walk in and swim. It's big and black and almost round, much bigger than me. And it kicks at the water round it so that the water ripples as it passes. I don't like it. I bark a little, but not too loud, just enough to tell Jeff and Cat that there's a Monster down there but I'll protect them—I think. And then I walk carefully along the bank towards it, sniffing all the way. I can't smell anything different, but I know it's a Monster.

So I stop and bark at it. It doesn't move, except to ripple the water, but it keeps on looking like a Monster, very black, very threatening, very dangerous. I jump at it, a little bit, not too far, and then I jump back again. It doesn't move. It just keeps on rippling the water, not really paying any attention to me at all.

So I bark louder and then I stop and sniff and sniff and sniff, but I still can't smell anything special. Jeff comes up and he stands there watching. He's happy and laughing and I don't know why. Not when there's a Monster around.

"Good dog, Candy girl!" he says. "Go get it!"

But I'm not going to dash in and get a great Monster as big as a big kennel. So I lie down with my paws out in front of me like I did with Cat, but this time I growl and I show the Monster my teeth to let it know what I'm going to do when I reach it.

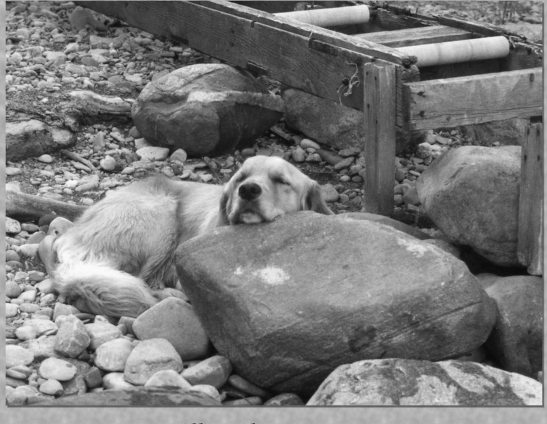
I creep slowly forward until I'm so close I can nearly touch it... And then a Thought strikes me, right through the Fuzz. That Monster doesn't have a smell! Not any Monster smell at all. It just smells like an old wet rock! In fact it is an old wet rock! I feel so silly. But I'm not going to let Jeff know. So I stand up, and I raise my head and put my tail out and I stalk away proudly so that Jeff and Cat will know that I really protected them.

But Jeff is still laughing. I don't think he should.

Jeff goes back to his pole. I don't think he's very happy with his pole. He was happy when I destroyed the Monster, but I don't think he's very happy with his pole. Now Cat, I think, looks very happy so I go down to see her. I never go very close to her when we are outside. It's different when we are inside. Then she comes and lies beside me or in between my front paws, but when we are outside she is more like an Animal and

doesn't like me too close. So I stay away and watch. She is lying at the edge of the bank looking very intently into the water.

Suddenly, quick as a flash, she shoots a paw into the water and flicks out something silvery and wriggling on to the bank. I jump forward to grab it but it leaps up and hits my nose. It is cold and wet so I jump back wondering if it will bite me. It doesn't bite me so I go forward again and take it in my mouth. It feels funny in my mouth. It wriggles. It feels like food, but not quite, so I think I'll take it up to Jeff.



Not All Rocks Are Monsters

Meantime Cat is catching more. I take it to Jeff and put it behind him and then I bark to tell Jeff I've got something. But he's still watching his pole and he says, without turning round:

"Not now, Candy! Mumble mumble, fish."

I don't know what "fish" is, so I go back to Cat and get another one. I pick it up and take it back to Jeff and lay it beside the first one. He doesn't notice so I go and get one more and put in down with the others. They're all lying behind Jeff. I bark again and he turns round. I think he's getting mad.

"Candy!" he says, "Stop barking! Mumble mumble fish!"

Then he sees the silvery things on the ground behind him. He looks at them and doesn't say a word. He looks at his pole. Then he picks it up and winds in the string. He looks at the end of the string where the worm is. It=s not wriggling any more. He looks back at the silvery things, as if they weren't real. He picks them up and looks at them very carefully. The he looks at me in a funny way and says, very slowly:

"Where mumble mumble fish, Candy? Did you do that?"

I know what "Did you do that?" means. Honey Babe say it when she thinks I've done something that I shouldn't have. But I haven't done anything wrong so I wag my tail and pant a little with my tongue hanging out as it sometimes does when I'm happy. He picks up the silvery things, the fish, and puts them in the bag beside him.

"I don't know, Candy," he says. "I just don't know."

I look at Cat who is in the grass nearby. She swishes her tail gently, not angry, just gently. I wag mine and we look at each other.

Jeff picks up his pole and his jar. I think he's still wondering. He turns to me and says:

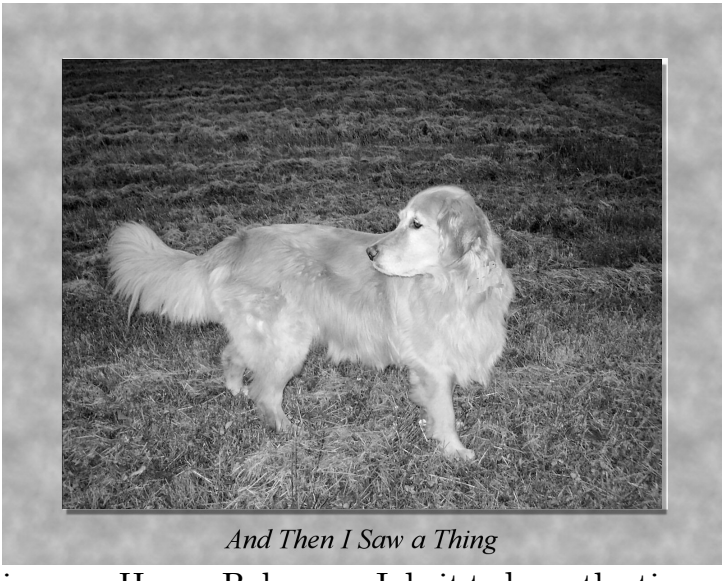
"OK, Candy, let=s go Walkies!" Oh, I do love Walkies!

CHAPTER 5

HOW CANDY KEPT THE TIGERS AWAY AND SAVED CAT FROM THE GREAT WATERS

Sometimes I go out by myself, out into the Dark Woods at the back. Well, it isn't really by myself, because Cat usually comes too. But while I run along the trail and into the Woods looking for Things, and chasing up smells, Cat slinks along in the grass and trees beside the trail. If I get too close to her she arches her back and hisses at me. I bark happily at her and then I'm off again. I don't mind if she arches her back. I know I could eat her if I really wanted to because I'm a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever. But, of course, I would never want to. Not unless I was really hungry, and that could never happen. I don't think.

Anyway, this day I trotted happily down the trail, stopping and sniffing here and there, darting into the Woods every now and then, just



And Then I Saw a Thing

in case. Honey Babe says I do it to keep the tigers away, but I didn't know what a tiger was then. I just did it anyway, while Cat slithered along in the grass.

And then I saw a Thing.

It was not a very big Thing. About the size of Cat, maybe a little bigger. It had big long ears that stuck up from its head and a little white fluffy tail. It sat sort of hunched up looking at me with its ears sticking out. I stopped, shocked that

I had actually seen a Thing. I knew they were there, but I'd never seen one before. And I didn't know they looked like that. So I looked at it as it sat there, and I wondered about it.

Then I thought a serious Fuzzy Thought. I thought maybe this is a Tiger, and if this is a Tiger then I'd better do something about it. But it didn't look like a very bad Tiger. It really looked like quite a friendly Tiger with its big ears and fluffy white blob of tail. However, I thought I'd better chase it anyway, so I did and it ran kind of hippety-hop into the Woods. I ran and it hopped and I ran and it hopped until it disappeared behind a big tree.

Now, I've chased Cat up a tree and I've chased lots of little animals with big tails up trees, so I know what must happen when you chase a Tiger. It must go up a tree. So I barked and barked and jumped at the tree and ran round it and barked again and nearly fell in the holes in the ground at the foot of the tree. But I couldn't see the Tiger. I could smell it but I couldn't see it. I thought it was probably up there laughing at me just like Cat used to do. So I barked at Cat who was watching in her usual conceited way:

"Hey, Cat! There's a Tiger up that tree! Go get it!"

But Cat paid no attention to me. She just sat there, licking her paws. I think she was laughing at me again, as though she knew better. So I barked and jumped until I nearly fell into one of the holes. Then I stopped and sniffed at a hole. There was a Thing in there, all right. I could smell it. It smelt just like the Tiger. So I sniffed and sniffed and dug a little with my front paws, but it still smelt like the Tiger.

So then I thought another Fuzzy Thought. How could the Tiger be down there when it went up the tree? I looked up the tree and I couldn't see the Tiger, and I sniffed down the hole and I could smell the Tiger. It was all very difficult because I knew that when you chased little animals they went up trees. Dogs don't go up trees, but little animals like cats and things, they go up trees.

So then I had still another Fuzzy Thought. Maybe the Tiger went up the tree and ran away. But then what about the Thing down the hole? I couldn't understand it. It was all very confusing. So I sat at the foot of the tree and waited. Nothing

happened. So I waited a bit longer. Nothing happened. And then after a while I forgot what I was waiting for and ran off down the trail. But somewhere in my mind I had a feeling that I had kept that Tiger away and that Honey Babe would be pleased. That made me feel good.

Meantime Cat had gone ahead. I don't think she really cared about the Tiger. But you can't tell with Cat. So I ran up and barked at her as I passed just to remind her that I was a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever and she was only a cat, and then I ran on down the trail until I came to the place where Jeff and I had gone fishing.

The water seemed much faster today and it seemed to be higher up. I went down to the sandy place and looked carefully at the Monster. It was gleaming black and shiny and kicking hard at the water, but it still smelt like an old wet rock so I left it alone and went in to play in the water. It was cool and smooth and it made you feel soft. I climbed out and shook myself all over Cat. I don't think she liked that because she arched her back and hissed at me, but that didn't frighten me any more. No old cat that was afraid of tigers was

going to frighten me. And anyway, I'd had enough of Cat.

So I chased her. I chased her away down the trail, long past anywhere we'd ever been before. And as we went down the trail, the water alongside got faster and faster. It smashed against rocks that looked like Monsters and it began to make a noise like the beginning of a great roar.

Cat finally jumped for a tree at the edge of the bank and scrambled up on to a branch that stretched out over the water. It wasn't a very high branch. I could just about reach it. So I jumped and barked and barked and jumped, almost touching the branch. Cat edged along it over the water.

And then she did a strange thing, something I'd never seen her do before. She jumped into the water! At least I think she jumped, but maybe—just perhaps—I frightened her and she fell in. She gave a sort of "Meow" sound with her head just sticking out of the water. So I jumped in too. I love the water. But I'd never played with Cat in the water before. This was

special. This was going to be fun, but the water was very fast and Cat was away up ahead. I could see her trying to catch hold of Rock Monsters but the Rock Monsters wouldn't let her hold on so I paddled hard to try and catch up with her. This was more fun than chasing her. And then Whoosh! She disappeared over a great wall of water as it fell down into the place below.

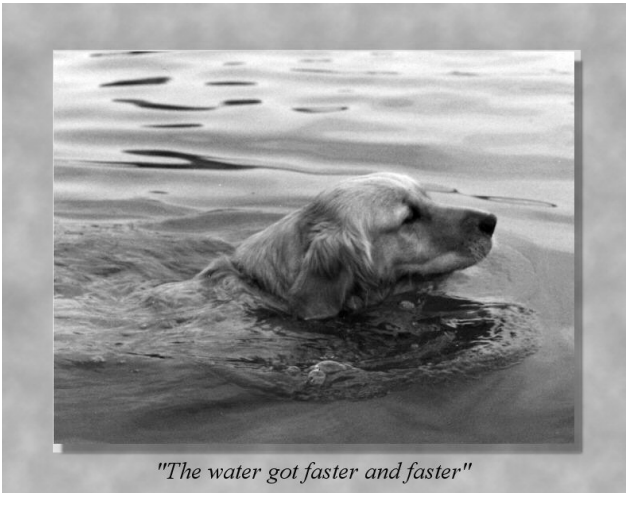
Then, while I was trying to catch up, the water got faster and faster. I began to wonder if this was really as much fun as I thought it might be. Perhaps this wasn't really playing anymore, because the water was getting very fast now. It kept bumping me into Rock Monsters that reached out for me but couldn't catch me. I began to think Frightened Thoughts that a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever shouldn't really think. Like perhaps this water doesn't like me. Perhaps I don't like it. Perhaps I'd better not play here anymore.

So I started to swim to the bank but I couldn't. The water was too fast. It swirled me round and it tossed me about. It threw me against the Rock Monsters. It held my head under. And

then suddenly I felt myself falling, just like when Cat had fallen over the edge.

I went down and down and down, with water all round me until the water stopped falling. Then I went down still further to the bottom of a deep pool. And then I started to struggle up and up and up until suddenly my head came out of the water again and I looked up at the Great Waters falling down behind me.

There were sticks and branches and all sorts of things swirling around with me and I could feel something stuck on my back. But the



"The water got faster and faster"

water was smooth now that I was in the pool below the Great Waters so I moved very slowly to the bank and clambered up. I fell down, panting, almost unable to move. The thing on my back fell off and lay down beside me.

I looked at it. It was small and black and very wet, and very miserable looking. I looked at it again and sniffed at it. I knew that smell. I had known it for a long time. I had chased that smell all over the garden, into bushes, up trees, down the trail, all over the place. That smell belonged to Cat, a small, black, wet, and miserable Cat. So I wagged my tail. Just a little bit. I was too tired to wag it any more. Cat struggled up to her feet, arched her back a little bit, and hissed at me. Just a little hiss. And then she lay down and began to lick the water off her paws. Just a little bit. We lay there together for a long time. Just Cat and me.

And that's how Candy saved Cat from the Great Waters, but nobody ever knew.

CHAPTER 6

HOW THOR CAME TO CANDY'S HOUSE AND HOW THEY ATE THE COOKIES

One day, when I was a puppy, I was chasing the ball—round and round the room, into the hall, into the other room, back into the hall—until I finally caught it. And then I dashed upstairs with it to see Honey Babe, but I forgot I was going to see Honey Babe so I sat at the top of the stairs with the ball in my mouth until it fell out.

It bounced down the stairs—bump, da-bump, da-bump, da-bump, da-bump, bump, bump, bump—until it reached the bottom.

It made a lovely noise so I tumbled down the stairs after it, rolling over at the bottom. I rolled over until I stopped at the glass window beside the front door. I came up, kind of fuzzy, and looked out the window.

There was a car just arriving outside. A man like Dave Honey and a lady like Honey Babe got out. The Dave Honey man opened the back door—AND OUT CAME A GREAT BIG DOG! A HUGE DOG! A dog as big as the Monster in the water—although I hadn't met the Monster then.

It was black and brown and it had a long tail, not a big bushy tail like mine is now, but a smooth, thick, heavy tail. And its head! Its head was nearly as big as Dave Honey's head, and when it opened its mouth you could see great big teeth that could eat you!

I jumped back from the window and yelped and yelped and yelped.

"Quiet, Candy?" said Honey Babe from Upstairs. "Mumble, mumble, noise!

"There's a GREAT BIG DOG outside!" I yelped. "It's going to eat us!"

Honey Babe came down the stairs and looked through the door window.

"It's OK, Candy," she said. "Mumble, mumble, Thor!" and she lifted me up in her arms.

I snuggled into her because I didn't like whatever a Thor might be, and I thought it might be that GREAT BIG DOG. Honey Babe opened the door and they all came inside.

Thor walked into the kitchen and right up to the kitchen table. Everybody followed. He put his great big head on the table and looked around with his eyes as though there might be something to eat. But there wasn't anything to eat except me! So he sat down and looked at me still in Honey Babe's arms.

He opened his mouth a little, put out a big tongue and licked his big lips. Honey Babe started to put me down, but I snuggled even closer into her. I knew what he wanted even if Honey Babe didn't!

"It's OK, Candy," she said. "Good dog, Thor!"

Thor's big tail moved slowly from side to side. He looked at me unblinking and licked his lips again. He might be a good dog, but I thought he looked like a hungry good dog. Honey Babe put me down anyway, and then got down beside me and stroked my head.

"It's OK, Candy," she said again. "Good dog, Thor."

She stroked me with one hand and reached out to stroke Thor with the other. Thor lay down with his huge paws out in front of him, one paw on each side of me, while Honey Babe continued stroking both of us.

"Good dog, Thor. Good dog, Candy," she said.

Thor didn't look quite so bad when he was down like that. His great big eyes looked at me, but they didn't seem quite so hungry. Honey Babe stood up, but she kept on saying:

"Good dog, Thor. Good dog, Candy"

I sat trembling between Thor's paws. I hoped that Thor knew he was a good dog. He kept on looking at me with those big eyes. Then he lifted one paw and knocked me over, gently. Then he lifted the other one, and knocked me back again. Not hard. Just gently. And when I tried to get away he put out one great paw and pulled me gently back again. It was like he was playing—in a big clumsy way. And then I thought, he is playing. So I started to play too.

I jumped at him, and he pushed me back. I pulled his ears with my teeth, and he shook his great head until I fell off. I grabbed his tail and he swished it until I couldn't hold on. I clambered on his back, and he rolled over on his side. I pushed him, I tugged him, I bit his neck with my little teeth, and I poked him. He didn't budge. He didn't growl. He didn't complain. He didn't even move away. So I scampered off, round and round the room. He slowly climbed to his feet and lumbered after me until he could reach out a big paw and pull me in again.

Then he did something very strange. He held me down with one paw and started to nibble.

Thor: A Huge Big Dog Is Going To Eat Me!

Not hurting. Tiny little nibbles with these huge front teeth that went all over me. Started at my head and went down to my tail, which was very small then. Along the back, down the sides. Back to front, front to back. Nibble, nibble, nibble. It felt wonderful! But when I tried to move, down would come a big paw and hold me until I lay down again ready for more nibbles. When he was finished I got up and shook myself and scampered away. Thor came lumbering after me and it started over again.

And that's how Thor came to our house.

But Thor didn't go away again. Not for a long time. His People went away. The Honey Babe person hung round his neck and cried a little bit, and the Dave Honey person patted his neck and said in a big voice:

"Good dog, Thor!" and walked out quickly.

But Thor stayed, and played, and bumped around on his big feet, and nibbled me, and sometimes even nibbled Baby Janey. Janey didn't mind. She gurgled and giggled and pulled Thor's ears and poked his eyes, and played with the jingles that hung around his neck. And he didn't

mind either. He wasn't afraid of babies like I was. But he was very gentle, and he never barked, and he never growled, and he never moved out of the way, even when Baby used to crawl all over him. He just used to sit there with me between his paws, and whenever I started to stray he would just pull me in with those big paws and look down on me almost like Honey Babe when she was holding Janey.

Sometimes I went to sleep there. I think maybe even Janey did, once. But Janey was usually too busy. She liked the jingles but couldn't stay long enough to feel warm and cozy like I did.

One day, long after Thor came, something happened in the kitchen. Something that made a wonderful smell. Honey Babe was Making Things. She often used to Make Things.

She would get all sorts of stuff and mix it together and then put it in the hotbox thing for a while and when she brought it out it was Cookies. Wonderful smelling, wonderful tasting Cookies! Or sometimes it was Cake. But this time it was Cookies and it was special.

We watched her. Janey sat at the table on a big book on top of a chair. She couldn't say very much, but she banged the table, and every little while she would look at Honey Babe and say:

"Cookies! Cookies!" and bang the table again.

Thor sat on the floor with his head on the table, looking at Honey Babe as she mixed up the cookie stuff, and I sat beside her looking up where she was working, just in case something might fall on to the floor where I could pick it up rather than have it mess up everything.

When she finished the Cookies she put them on a plate and placed them on the kitchen table and then stood back to look at them. Thor looked at them. Janey looked at them. They looked beautiful and smelt gorgeous. I love Cookies. Even People Cookies. So I thought about these Cookies and how they might taste and whether maybe Honey Babe might let me have one sometime. Or even a bit of one. Or even a crumb. Or perhaps the plate after the cookies were gone. I was thinking things like that when Honey Babe left the room. She was away for a little while.

When she left, Thor moved his head a little so that he could look at the cookies better. He looked for a little while then he stretched his neck forward and put out a big tongue. He licked a cookie. He pulled it into his mouth with his tongue. He licked another one and ate it. He flicked a couple off on to the floor. I ate them. They were good. He flicked another one off. I ate that one too. Thor ate all the rest and then lumbered off into the corner to lie down. I went and lay down beside him with my head on his paws.

We lay there together for a little while. I thought a lot about the taste of the cookies. And then Honey Babe came back in. She looked at the empty plate, her mouth open. She looked at Thor in the corner with me on his paws. She looked at Janey.

"Oh Baby!" she said. "Mumble, mumble, mumble, cookies!"

Baby smiled and giggled.

"Cookie!" she said. "Cookie!"

Thor heaved a great big sigh and went off to sleep. I lay on his paws and wagged my tail a little.

I was very sad when Thor finally had to go back to his own kennel.

CHAPTER 7

HOW CANDY MET WAFFLES AND HOW WAFFLES WON THE RIGHT TO THE DOG CHAIR

There is a big old chair that sits in a corner of the room where Honey Babe makes dinner and other Good Things. It is very old, soft, and torn a little. Nobody sits in it except me, and sometimes Cat, not even Jeff. Honey Babe calls it the Dog Chair, and since I am the dog it really is my chair.

Cat sits there occasionally, but only when I=m not around. Even Thor, when he was here, didn't try to sit in it when I was there. He couldn't, anyway. He was too big. And if Cat was there when I arrived I just needed to look at her and she would jump off.

Anyway, on this day I was sitting in the Dog Chair and Honey Babe was in the hall looking out at the long driveway through the glass in the front door. Suddenly she called out, loud and happy:

AHey! Jeff! mumble, Car! mumble, mumble, Nanna, mumble mumble!@

Jeff came tumbling down the stairs in a great hurry and joined Honey Babe at the door.

ACome on, Candy!@ He yelled. ANanna, mumble mumble, Car!@

Now I know what Car is, though I wasn't sure what Nanna was so I began to bark, a happy bark because I think things are going to be good. And I ran and joined them both, barking and scrabbling at the door. The car stopped at the top of the driveway where we could still see it.

The door opened and out came a Honey Babe type of person. She was carrying something in both arms. I was sniffing the air trying to find out what it was all about, and then suddenly I remembered. Nanna! Nanna who would give me hugs, and ruffle the fur around my neck, and all the time she would say:

AGood dog, Candy! Candy=s a good dog! And then she would stroke me, all the way down from my head to my tail, and ruffle me under my neck. It was good!

But then, still sniffing, I became aware of something else, something that smelt like dog, although I couldn't see any dog. Only Nanna with her bundle. She came up to the door still carrying it.

ACome in, mumble, mumble!@ said Honey Babe, pulling her in to the house. APut it down! mumble, mumble. Big hug!@

I knew what Abig hug!@ meant, and I even knew what APut it down@ meant. Someone was always saying that to me when I had something in my mouth I wasn't supposed to have. But I wasn't sure what it meant when Honey Babe said it to Nanna. However, Nanna seemed to know. She lowered her bundle to the floor.

And it ran away! I was shocked! Completely shocked! So I jumped back and barked at it. The bundle stopped and looked back at me. The dog smell got stronger and stronger, but I'd never seen a dog like that before. It was small, very long, with a long nose and a long tail, and little short legs that seemed to bend out at the feet. It sat back on its little short back end with its little short front legs splayed out. And then it barked at

me! Barked at me! Me, a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever. And this little thing actually barked at me!

I barked harder and jumped forwards towards it. But it didn't move. It just opened its mouth and showed me some tiny little teeth. Tiny, but sharp. I stopped barking and moved forwards again, very slowly this time until we were almost nose-to-nose. I sat down and we sniffed noses gently, then suddenly its tail began to wag. Not a full wag. It just started at the far end and then moved up the long tail until the whole tail was wagging, and then on into the body until the whole body was wriggling. As I watched it my tail went thump on the floor. I stood up and my tail wagged, a little bit at first and then more and more.

AGood dog, Candy,@ said Nanna. AGood dog, Waffles!@

AWaffles!@ I thought to myself. AThat=s a Waffles! At least I=m glad it=s not a real dog!@

So I stood up and walked back to the Dog Chair. I curled round in it, as I usually did, with

my tail just touching my nose. Waffles followed me and sat down facing the chair with me in it.

She looked at me for a moment and then suddenly with a mighty leap she landed just beside me. I was so surprised I didn't know what to do. Nobody sits in my chair! And certainly not a Waffles that smells like a dog but can't be a real dog because real dogs don't look like that.

I gave a little growl and pushed her gently off. It didn't seem to bother her. She just gave another mighty leap, this time right on top of me. I growled again and showed my teeth. This time I think she understood. She hopped off and lay down on the floor. I felt good. I knew that a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever owned that chair and nobody else could use it.

Honey Babe was watching. She was smiling.

AO.K. Candy!@ She said. AOutside mumble, mumble. Outside Waffles!@ And she pushed us towards the door.

I blocked the door so that I could get out first, but Waffles ran between my legs and away

she went, away towards the Dark Woods. It didn't seem to bother her that there might be Tigers there, or any other bad things. She ran into the long grass at the edge of the woods, barking, as she smelt Little Animals hiding there, holding her tail up high as she ran. All I could see was the tip of her tail as she ran this way and that way, or sometimes the top half of her body above the grass as she stood on her hind legs barking at me to come and join the hunt.

And then as she came out of the grass she saw the hole in the bank where the fat furry animal lives, the fat furry animal that tried to bite me, until Honey Babe and I, or maybe it was just Honey Babe, chased it away.

But anyway, Waffles saw the hole in the bank and ran up to it. She sniffed and sniffed and put her head inside.

And then she went inside! All by herself, right into where the fat furry animal lived. I could hear her scrabbling, and then she started to bark and growl, a funny muffled kind of bark from inside the hole. I could hear all sorts of sounds, and then suddenly, out of the hole came the fat furry animal. It got its head out and then it

started to run, and out came Waffles behind it, still barking, as she chased it into the Dark Woods.

I stood and watched, amazed. A little thing like that with funny short legs that thinks she's really a dog! Chasing the fat furry animal, all by herself. No Honey Babe or anything! I=m a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever and I=m not really afraid of any fat furry animal....Am I? But I don't know if I would have gone gone into that hole, even if I could, but of course I couldn't. Could I? But if I had, I would have chased it. I think. If I had gone into that hole.

I was thinking Fuzzy Thoughts like that when Waffles came out of the Dark Woods again, her head up high and her tail straight out. She went to the door and Honey Babe let her in. I looked at the hole for a little, thinking more Fuzzy Thoughts, glad that I hadn't been able to chase the fat furry animal, and then I went into the house, back to the Dog Chair.

Waffles was sitting in it. She seemed very comfortable. I stood in front of the Chair and looked at her the way I look at Cat when she sits

in it. Waffles didn't move. I put a big paw on the Chair. She still didn't move, she didn't growl, she just opened her mouth and showed me these little sharp teeth. I pulled back my paw and lay down in front of the Chair. I know a big dog when I see one, even if it=s a funny little long thing with short legs. I wasn't going to sit on that Chair when she was in it. Not for a long time yet. But maybe, just maybe, we could become good friends and one day we could share the Chair. That was a Good Thought. I continued to think it and Waffles continued to stay in the Chair, as though she owned it, not me.

But I=m a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever, and she=s only a Waffles.

CHAPTER 8

HOW CANDY IGNORED THE SNOWMAN AND HOW HER STICK SAVED JEFF

It was the day the snow came, although I didn't know what snow was then, not until Jeff came bounding down the stairs to the front door. He threw it open and called:

AHey Candy, Candy! Come! Mumble mumble. Come! SNOW!@

I rolled off the dog chair in the kitchen and ambled round to the front door and looked out. It was all white! Tiny white leafs fluttered down, flittering and fluttering until they settled on top of more white leafs—more and more, until everything was covered, the grass in front of the house, the little trees around the house, and the big trees in the Dark Woods, which were no longer dark. The hole in the bank where the fat furry animal lived looked black against the white bank.

I barked a little because I didn't quite know what it was all about. Jeff put his hand on my neck where the fur was thick and ran his fingers through the fur. He went out and took some of the white stuff in his hand. He held it to my nose. I sniffed but couldn't smell anything, so I tasted it. I didn't taste anything. It wasn't worth eating. But Jeff liked it.

AIt=s all right Candy@, he said. AIt=s snow! It=s good!@

I felt better at that and rubbed against his leg.

ACome, Candy, he said. ALet=s go!@

I stepped out on to the snow. It came almost all the way up my legs, and it was cold. In fact it had been cold for days and days, long before the snow came. But I've got thick fur and I don't mind cold, although sometimes my paws can get cold, particularly when little chunks of snow get caught in them and get hard. Then I have to sit down and bite the little chunks out. Not like people. People get all dressed up in thick clothes and furs and big boots, and if they get little

chunks in their boots they don't have to bite them out

So I ran through the snow with my tail up and my ears flopping and the snow fluffed and fluttered around me while Jeff went back into the house. When he came back he was all dressed up in great thick clothes so that you couldn't see it was really Jeff.

ALet=s go, Candy,@ he said. AMumble, mumble Snowman!@

I had no idea what a snowman was but Jeff ran into the snow, and I followed him. He took some snow in his hands and rolled it into a ball. When he threw the ball at me I jumped and caught it, but it disappeared in my mouth and all I had was funny water. Jeff laughed.

AGood girl, Candy,@ he said. AOK, mumble, mumble, Snowman!@

He took another ball and he rolled it in the snow until it got bigger—and bigger, and bigger. Then he took another ball and rolled it bigger until it was big enough to sit on top of the first one. And then he took another one, smaller, and

put it on top of the first two. Then he picked up a stick from under the snow and stuck it into the little ball and took off his hat and put it on top of the little ball. Then he stood back and said:

ALook, Candy! Snowman!@

But I couldn't see any Snowman. All I could see was some lumps of snow with a stick. I jumped on it to have some fun but it just fell down, so I turned away and started to sniff in the snow to see if there were any little animals inside, but I couldn't find any.

I don't think Jeff was very pleased either for he said ABad dog, Candy!@ And took the stick away from the top ball and threw it over the snow. I saw the stick arching away as Jeff said:

ACandy! Get the stick!@

That=s easy. I've done that often enough. I shuffled through the snow as fast as I could go and brought it back to him. AGood girl!@ He said, and threw it again. I got it again, and again and again, until we both got tired of it and finally Jeff said:

AO.K. Candy, Come!@, and he went off towards the Dark Woods.

The trees were all covered with snow, just like the tree from which I got my name, but not so nice. He walked along the trail through the trees, and I scampered alongside him bumping into trees and knocking snow down on top of him while I looked for Tigers. In the end we came to where the river was, but it looked different somehow. It didn't seem to be moving, and everything was very still. I still had the stick in my mouth. Jeff took it and threw it into the river. I jumped forward into the water to get it, but it wasn't water. It was HARD!

I didn't know water could be hard, but I slipped and slithered forward until I finally reached the stick and brought it back, laying it down at Jeff=s feet. He picked it up and threw it again, but I was looking for Tigers and didn't see it go.

AGet the stick!@ Said Jeff, but I couldn't see any stick and went back to sniff for Tigers. So Jeff walked out on to the hard river to get the stick

himself. He was out quite a long way when I heard a cracking noise and I heard him yell.

He was in the real water, not the hard stuff. I didn't know why he wanted to go into the water when it was so cold, but you never know what people do. I could see him try to get out, but every time he got to the edge of the hole it seemed to break and get bigger and he couldn't get out. And then I heard him shout:

aCANDY! GET THE STICK!@

Now, my stick was gone. I don't know where, and I didn't know why he was wanting to play with the stick when he was in the river. And then I heard him yell again:

aCANDY! GET THE STICK!@

I looked around. I couldn't see my stick. I couldn't see any stick. And then I saw a stick poking out of the snow. A big thick stick. A long stick. Longer than me. But I pulled and tugged until out it came, a big long thick stick. I pulled it behind me and walked on to the hard river towards Jeff. He was still yelling. The hard river creaked and cracked and I thought I would join

Jeff in the water, but it just kept on creaking and cracking until I got up to Jeff.

He said: AGood dog, Candy! Good dog!@

I wagged my tail, pleased that I was a good dog. He took the stick from me and placed it across the hole. He struggled on top of the stick and over on to the hard river. It didn't break. I went up and licked his nose. He grabbed my collar and said:

AGo home, Candy!@

I knew what that meant. I turned towards home with Jeff holding my collar, and as I pulled he slowly came out of the river until we finally got to the bank. He was cold, very cold, and he started to run. We ran all the way home until Jeff fell against the door with a bump. Honey Babe opened the door and Jeff fell in.

AOh, Jeff,@ she said, AMumble, mumble,@ and pulled him in.

Nobody paid any attention to me so I went back into the Dark Woods to look for Tigers.

CHAPTER 9

HOW CANDY HEARD THE CALL OF THE WILD AND HOW SHE SAVED BABY

This morning something was different. Something was going to happen. I could tell. Things were not being done as usual. Dave Honey was not going to work. Jeff was not going to School Everybody was running around getting clothes and things and putting them in cases and boxes. And everybody was a little bit excited. I would follow first one, and then the other, and they would trip over me and Honey Babe would say:

"No! Mumble mumble! Sit, Candy!"

So I sat, feeling sad, wondering what was happening, and hoping nobody would forget me. And then when all the boxes and things were outside Dave Honey said:

"OK, Candy! Walkies in the Car!'

Now Walkies is good, but Walkies in the Car, that's special! When you go Walkies in the Car you go somewhere. Janey sits in her special chair in the back seat looking out one window, and Jeff sits on the other side, and I sit in the middle, sitting up straight and looking like a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever.

I bark at the cats, and I bark at the dogs, and I bark at the man with the hose who comes and puts stuff in the car. Everybody says "Quiet, Candy!" But I bark anyway because it keeps Tigers and things away. Sometimes we go to Gran's and get cookies, and sometimes we go to Shopping, and get bags of stuff, and sometimes we just go.

But today, this was different. With all these boxes and cases I knew we were going Somewhere Special. So I ran for the car. And then I stopped and thought about my baby. Not a Fuzzy Thought. a sudden sharp thought. So I turned round and ran back into the house before Dave Honey could shut the door, right into the big room and behind the chair. There it was, just lying there.

You see, I have this baby. Not a baby like Baby is a baby, but a baby that Honey Babe calls Candy's baby. It is soft and white and fluffy, and it looks like a puppy, but it doesn't smell like a puppy. It smells like one of Baby's toys except it has my smell as well. I sometimes hold it in my mouth, and sometimes I lie on my back and hold it between my paws, and sometimes I just lie on the floor with one paw on it, or even just beside it. Sometimes it just lies on the floor by itself, or maybe on a chair, and then Honey Babe says:

"Go find your baby, Candy!"

So I jump over to where it's lying and pick it up in my mouth, very gently, and bring it back to her. She says:

"Nice baby!" and fondles my head and neck.

I feel all warm and my tail wags. Then she says:

"Go lie down, now, Candy!" So I take my baby and go and lie down, nuzzling it.

Janey likes my baby. She likes to hold it. She picks it up when I'm not looking and sits holding it like a real baby. Or walks around with it because she can walk now. So I stand there

watching her very carefully waiting for her to put it down. Sometimes she does, and sometimes she doesn't. And when she doesn't Honey Babe says:

"Now Janey! Give mumble mumble Candy!"

Janey holds it out, not very happy, and I take it from her gently. I'm glad to get my baby back and I wag my tail. But then sometimes when I'm watching her I forget why I am watching and go and do something else.

So now I grab my baby from behind the chair and run back to the car. We went in the car for a long long time. At first there were lots of other cars and a great big road. And then the road got smaller until there were no other cars.

And then I began to smell some wonderful smells—smells from trees and flowers and things that were different from the ones at my kennel, smells from Animals and Things that I had never smelt before, not like Tiger, nor Skunk nor the Fat Furry Animal, but different. Exciting smells—smells of water, and grass, and rocks, and cut wood, and fish, and things I didn't know, all different from the smells that I did know. I began

to quiver, just with the excitement of it all. I was ready to jump, to run, even to fly if I could.

And then, when the road had become a trail, Dave Honey said:

"Look! The Cottage!"

I didn't know what he meant, but everybody looked so I looked. All I could see was a house kennel, except it was different. Not like our kennel. Our kennel was big and hard and shiny. This one was small, and soft, and looked like it was made of trees. But it smelt good. It smelt like good things happened.

It had great big windows in front, and you could sit on the deck and look over the grass and the sand to the water—lots and lots and lots of water. So I got out of the Car and ran round and round and poked my nose into places and sniffed and sniffed, because when you come to a new place you have to learn it. And the only way you can learn it is by sniffing.

So I sniffed and sniffed until I heard a strange noise. I looked up into the trees and then suddenly I saw the Whooo Bird! I stopped and I shivered, because it was looking at me with these

huge round eyes. It sat on the branch of a tree. Not like Cat, not like the birds at my kennel, but like a strange forest thing. It sat and looked at me with its big round eyes in a big round face. Then one eye blinked. I jumped back a little. The other eye blinked. And I jumped again. And then it went "Whooo-o-o!" once more, a strange lonely call that had all the wonder of the forest. And kept on looking at me.

I looked back at it, absolutely still. Then from deep inside me I felt a howl beginning. The Whooo Bird went "Whooo!" again and my howl began to come, a howl that was long and lonely, a howl that said this Whooo Bird is calling me. It's calling me back into the forest. It wants me to be with all the Things in the forest. It wants me to leave Honey Babe and Walkies and Dinner and go free in the forest. And as I howled I began to think it would be good to be free in the forest, to run like a wild thing, and live with the Tigers even if it meant not being with Honey Babe anymore.

But then while I was thinking about being free in the forest a Fuzzy Thought began to creep in. I thought maybe it's not so nice being in the forest with Tigers and other Things that might be

a lot worse than Tigers—and being with a Whooo bird that makes me feel bad. Maybe it's nice to have Walkies and Dinner and sit beside Dave Honey and wag my tail for Baby. Maybe it's better to be a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever than just another Thing in the forest.

So I stopped howling and I barked at the Whooo bird and it flapped its wings and flew off. And I felt good again because I'd kept another kind of tiger away. Since there were no more Tigers I went into the new kennel. It smelt good. It smelt like good things happened there. All the boxes and cases were back in again and things were as they ought to be. Dave Honey was out at the back, breaking pieces of wood, and Honey Babe was making Dinner and stuff. I was glad I was not out in the forest alone.

Then Janey came into the room. She looked at my baby lying on the floor and picked it up. She went outside. So I went out after her just in case she dropped it and I could pick it up again. But she didn't drop it. She climbed down from the deck on to the grass and walked in her funny way down over the sand towards the water, holding my baby by its paw and making happy noises. I

went along beside her. It was like going Walkies and I had never been Walkies with Baby before.

We walked down to the water but we didn't go into the water. She turned away and went along a trail into the forest, still holding my baby by its paw. I began to tremble a little because I thought we might meet the Whooo bird, and the Whooo bird makes me feel strange. But I went with her anyway because she still had my baby.

We walked away along the trail and down another trail and still another trail. I didn't see the Whooo bird and I didn't see any Tigers. I didn't see anything but Janey and my baby and all the trees.

Then finally she stopped walking. She sat down and started to play with the sand, but she still kept my baby so close beside her that I couldn't pick it up. So I waited. And I waited. It began to get dark and a Dinner thought began to come to me. I thought about Honey Babe making stuff, and I thought about my dinner bowl and how good it might be, until I couldn't think of anything else. So I forgot about my baby and left

Janey playing in the sand and went back to the kennel.

When I got there Honey Babe and Dave Honey were on the deck. Honey Babe was crying. I went over and sat down looking up at her because I don't like it when People cry. Dave Honey put his arm round her and said:

"It's OK, Honey. Mumble, mumble. We'll find Baby!"

Then he said something to Jeff and pointed, and said something to Honey Babe and pointed, and they all went off on Walkies by themselves very quickly. I followed Jeff. He went this way and that way, and he looked behind bushes and rocks, and he went over sandy hills, and soft wet places. And he called:

"Janey, Janey!", and sometimes he called: "Baby, Baby!"

I think he was looking for Baby. That was silly. I knew where Baby was, so I went to find Dave Honey in case he might want to go Walkies. But he was calling and calling, just like Jeff, and so was Honey Babe, so I went back to sit on the deck.

They all came back after a little while. Honey Babe was still crying. Dave Honey was looking like he looks when I've done something bad, and Jeff was very quiet. And then Dave Honey turned and looked at me. He looked at me for a long time, and then he said something very special. He said:

"Candy! Go find your baby!"

Now perhaps what he really said was "Candy! Go find Baby!" but I thought he was telling me to find my baby. I know what that means. Honey Babe is always saying that to me. And I knew where my baby was. It was with their Baby away in the forest with the Whooo bird and the Tigers. So I set off at a run to find my baby.

I heard Dave Honey behind me, and Jeff behind him, and Honey Babe behind Jeff. I went down towards the water and I turned off on to the trail into the forest, and down the trail, along the river, and right down towards where my baby was. I didn't care about the Whooo bird and I didn't care about the Tigers, and I didn't care about the other Things because Dave Honey had told me to find my baby.

And there she was lying forgotten beside Janey who was playing happily in the sand. I pounced on my baby, and wagged my tail, and nuzzled it gently just like Thor used to do to me. Janey Baby looked up and said:

"Daddy come!"

Dave Honey picked her up and held her very tight, and held Honey Babe very tight, and Jeff very tight. And then he gave her to Honey Babe and sat down beside me. He put his arms round my neck and held me very tight and said very quietly:

"Oh, Candy! You're a wonderful, wonderful dog!"

He was crying too. I wagged my tail. I had gotten my lost baby back.

CHAPTER 10

HOW CANDY AND WAFFLES WENT HUNTING AND HOW WAFFLES BROUGHTHER CATCH BACK

I was sitting on the dog chair on this particular morning, on the dog chair where I belonged, pleased to be on the dog chair alone, with no Waffles to glare at me, when I heard Honey Babe open the back door and say, in a loud voice, kind of angry, kind of proud:

AWaffles! Mumble, mumble. Oh! Waffles, bad dog! Mumble, mumble, mumble!@

Now, I didn't want to think of Waffles being a bad dog, but I was pleased it wasn't me, so I lumbered off the dog chair and ambled round to the back door to see what it was all about. However, when I looked, it didn't seem to be very much. The only thing different that I could see was three of the little animal things that Waffles chases in the grass. They were lying on the back step where Waffles puts them when she catches

them. She likes to bring them home like that so that everyone can see how clever she is.

But I don't think she's all that clever. I could catch them if I wanted to. I think. Couldn't I? But surely a Big Beautiful Golden Retriever shouldn't want to catch silly little things in the grass. If she wants to catch anything at all she should want to catch Tigers, and I don't think I want to catch Tigers.

Waffles likes to go out and hunt for Tigers. At least I think she likes to hunt for them, but she never seems to find any. Not that I've seen anyway. Sometimes I would lie on the deck at the front of the house and watch her, but all I could see as she ran through the long grass would be her tail sticking straight up in the air.

Every now and then she would give a yelp and run faster, and her tail would wag, still sticking straight up. And sometimes she would stop running and actually bark, to tell me to come and help her because she had really found something, like one of the little things that live in the grass, or perhaps even a Tiger. But I wasn't too sure about meeting a Tiger, so mostly I would lift myself off the deck and go down a little way to

see what was happening and then go back and lie down again.

Anyway, I couldn't see anything important about the little animals on the back step, so I thought I would go and lie on the deck and look at things. And then I saw Waffles—tail up, nose to the ground, yelping and clearly on the trail of something important. She stopped, sat up with her long body balanced unsteadily on her hind legs, and barked and barked and barked:

"Candy! Come here! Come quickly! Come and help! It=s great! I've got something!@

And then I saw it, running in front of her at a surprising speed for a fat furry animal, the same fat furry animal that I had frightened away, long before Waffles ever came here. Or was it really Honey Babe who did it? I don't remember now, but I wasn't too keen to meet it again. However, I didn't want Waffles to be frightened by it, so I got off the deck and went to show Waffles that everything would be all right now that I was here.

When I got there the fat furry animal was standing on its hind legs with its back to a tree, growling, showing its teeth, and waving its front

paws with long claws that looked as if they could slash Waffles wide open. It didn't seem to frighten Waffles though. She was in front of it, barking and snarling and showing her little teeth. Every now and then she would jump forward to attack it, but the fat furry beast would just knock her away with those paws without actually slashing her.

I didn't want to get too near in case I upset Waffles, so I stood back a little bit, far enough not to get slashed, but close enough to Waffles so that she could see that I was there, and that everything would be all right.

And then Honey Babe came. She had a big stick.

AWaffles! Candy! Mumble, mumble mumble! Off! Off! Back!@

She waved the big stick at the fat furry animal. It growled at her and waved its paws, and then turned away and ran off.

Waffles and I looked at each other. I think we both felt pretty good. Waffles took off down the long lane across the road and into the other woods, not the Dark Woods, but the other woods. I

followed her, just to see she didn't get into any more trouble.

We went quite a distance into the woods until we came to a sort of open space. And then we suddenly saw the Moo Beast. It was the biggest

Waffles The Mighty Hunter

thing I had ever seen. It had a great big head, with horn things sticking out of it. It saw us and put its head down and made a sound like AMoo!@ Waffles was quivering with excitement.

She barked and jumped at it, but it didn't pay much attention, and when Waffles came close it just pushed her away with those horns on its head. Waffles didn't know what to do. She ran round it and jumped at it but every time she got near it just moved away.

Nothing seemed to be happening so I thought I would leave her there and go back and see if Honey Babe had something for me to eat. So I went back home and climbed into the dog chair again. I think maybe I went to sleep. And then I heard Honey Babe shouting. She was standing at the front door looking down the lane.

ADave Honey!@ She called her voice high and excited. ADave Honey! Come quick! Waffles!@

Something was happening, I could tell, so I jumped off the chair and ran to the open front door. I looked out. Waffles was barking and I could feel the hair stand up on the back of my neck when I saw what was happening. There was Waffles, running round and round a bunch of these Great Beasts, biting at their heels, shoving them up the lane, nearer and nearer to the house.

Waffles was bringing her catch back, to leave them at the back door.

CHAPTER 11

HOW CANDY SAVED THE FAMILY AND BECAME A HERO

There is a black box-thing on the table beside the bed where Honey Babe and Dave Honey sleep. Every now and then it makes a "t-r-r-ing" sound and anyone who is there takes the top off, places it beside his head, or her head, and talks to it. It seems strange, but everybody does it, even Janey sometimes when Honey Babe holds her. I've sniffed it very carefully, but there's no one there. There's another one in the big room.

One day when it made its noise I accidentally knocked the top off and it spoke to me. I didn't like it and I growled at it, but then Honey Babe came in and took it away. She spoke to it quite happily. There are some things I don't understand.

Jeff sleeps in the room next door to the big bedroom where the black box is and Janey sleeps in a little room in her cage-thing. At nighttime,

when Dave Honey and Honey Babe go to bed, Dave Honey gives me a cookie and I go to my basket. My basket is in their bedroom in a corner. It has a soft cover and it smells good and I lie in it all night.

When I finish my cookie I curl up tight and keep my nose warm with my tail until it's time to get up again. Sometimes I sniff or hear Bad Things in the night and then I growl a little, or even bark. If I growl enough, or bark enough, Dave Honey gets up and looks out the window. And then he says:

"OK, Candy. It's OK. Lie down, now. Good girl!"

So I lie down with my tail curled round and know that everything's all right again.

One night, in the deep dark, everyone was asleep and I was curled in my basket. When I'm asleep I'm really half awake and I know if anything different happens. This night I heard a car. It was not Dave Honey's car, and it was going slowly along the road. I don't like it when cars go slowly along the road. Cars are not supposed to go slowly along the road.

It stopped outside our house and I heard the car door open and shut. And then I became aware that whoever opened the door was a Bad Man doing a Bad Thing, although I don't know how I knew that. I just knew it was bad. Things are like that. Sometimes I see people away in front of me and I know they like dogs although I don't even know who they are. So I run up to them wagging my tail and they pet me and tell me I'm beautiful. And sometimes I see people and I know they don't like dogs so I walk round them and don't even look at them.

But anyway, I knew this was a Bad Thing so I growled, just a muttering kind of growl, sort of saying I don't like this but maybe it'll go away. But the Bad Thing came closer. I growled louder.

Then I heard a touch on the front door. I jumped up, growling and barking, and ran to the place between the bed and the wall so that Dave Honey was closest to the bedroom door but I could still protect him by barking. Dave Honey and Honey Babe sat up.

"What's the matter, Candy?", Dave Honey said. "Mumble, mumble, noise!"

He got up and walked to the window. Then he turned to Honey Babe and his voice changed.

"Hey! Honey, mumble, mumble mumble, man!"

He put on the long coat that was lying at the end of the bed and started downstairs. I stayed behind the bed and kept on barking. Then there was a loud noise as the door burst in and a lot of shouting. The feeling of a Bad Thing was very, very strong. Honey Babe jumped out of bed and ran to the top of the stairs.

I stayed behind the bed until I realized that there was nobody left to look after me so I ran downstairs to get behind Dave Honey, and as I ran out of the room Jeff ran in and picked up the black box beside the bed and began to poke at it.

Dave Honey was standing in the hall. There was a man in the hall, not a very big man, not as big as Dave Honey, but a Bad Man. He had a black thing in his hand, which I knew was a Very Bad Thing Indeed, and he was pointing it at Dave Honey, and shouting at him. I growled and barked, very loud, very angry. He tried to kick me,

but I stayed carefully out of the way behind Dave Honey.

Honey Babe was still at the top of the stairs. She looked very frightened. And then I saw Jeff coming down the stairs. He had a big wooden bat in his hand. Honey Babe tried to stop him as he went by but he kept on coming. Dave Honey yelled:

"Back, Jeff!", but he didn't seem to hear.

He just kept on coming, right up to stand beside Dave Honey with the bat raised over his head. The Bad Man yelled at him and then, quick as a flash, smacked him on the side of the head and knocked him to the floor.

I was still standing behind Dave Honey, just to make sure he would be all right, but as Jeff fell to the floor something strange began to happen to me. I knew the Bad Man had done something very bad. He had hurt Jeff, my Jeff, and as I realized that he had hurt him I began to feel broiling inside me all the fire and the power of all the Big Beautiful Golden Retrievers that had gone before me.

I began to feel inside me all the strength that had carried them over hill and valley, through forest and river, in icy cold and blazing heat, although I couldn't really tell what it was I was feeling. I could feel the surge of protective instinct that had long ago kept the puppies safe from the bears in the forest—not just from the Tigers in the Dark Woods.

And as these feelings overflowed I lunged forward, past the protection of Dave Honey, past the sprawled form of Jeff on the floor, straight for the bad black thing that the Bad Man was pointing at Dave Honey. I seized his wrist, and in a blaze of triumph I dragged him to the floor. He screamed, he hit, he kicked, but I hung on, even when Dave Honey shouted at me to stop. I gloried in my strength. I felt I was destroying a bad thing and I was keeping my family Safe from Harm.

And then, just as fast as it came, all the feeling went away. I sat back looking at Dave Honey and wagged my tail. He picked up the black thing from the floor and held it very carefully, pointing it at the man.

Then suddenly there were all sorts of noise outside, with cars and blinking red lights and lots of people. And they all carried black things in their hands, too. So I growled again, because the black things were bad and there was a feeling of violence and anger. But Dave Honey put his hand on my neck and said:

"It's OK, Candy. Good dog, mumble, mumble!"

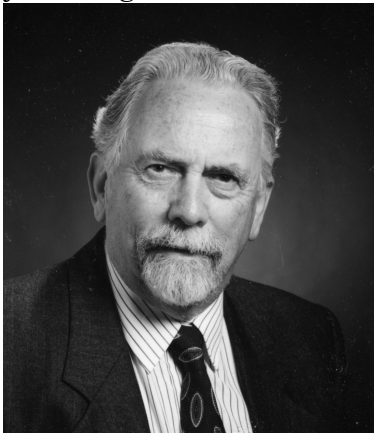
So I stopped growling and wagged my tail again. The men from the cars came in and talked a lot and then took the man with the bad black thing away. Dave Honey went back to Honey Babe. She had come downstairs carrying Janey. Jeff was beside her. They put their arms round each other and hugged. I sat on the floor watching and wagging my tail. Dave Honey looked down and said:

"Oh Candy! You're a real hero!"

I didn't know what a Real Hero was, but it sounded nice so I wagged my tail harder. But at the same time I had a feeling that if Jeff hadn't spoken to the black box upstairs I might have been hurt. I still don't know what a Real Hero is,

but sometimes when I'm lying on the floor thinking Fuzzy Thoughts I think about being hurt and I whimper a little. But sometimes, also, I think of the glorious feeling when I lunged forward to get the Bad Man, and as I lie on the floor thinking about it my tail goes thump and Honey Babe looks up and says, sort of absently:

"Good dog, Candy!" I like that



The Author

T.M. Fraser is a medical doctor, a certified professional engineer, and Professor Emeritus of the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, with six textbooks and numerous technical and professional papers to his credit. But although his vocation may be technical and professional, his avocation lies with dogs, and their delightful habits.

Candy

Come And Meet Candy

The Big Beautiful Golden Retriever

A Book For Adults And Kids Alike!

Enjoy It Yourself!

Read It To Your Kids!

Savor The Wry Humor

Candy is big, bold, bright, and beautiful. Or at least she thinks she is. But, although she is certainly beautiful, she is really more timid than bold, and more dumb than bright. But, somehow, she always seems to do the right thing at the right time. And somehow, the author seems to have gotten into her mind to let her tell her stories in her own words. And these are her stories.